The Cleveland Museum of Art

The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection at the Cleveland Museum of Art

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, February 28, 2013
Exhibition complemented with a robust lineup of programs, ranging from lectures and tours to theatrical presentations by Theater Ninjas, a Cleveland-based performance group

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CLEVELAND (February, 2013) –The Cleveland Museum of Art presents ***The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection,*** a critical look at how artists have turned to the subject of Pompeii and the cataclysmic eruption of Mount Vesuvius, projecting modern ideas onto the ancient city. Three themes—decadence, apocalypse and resurrection—explore how centuries of artists from the 1700s to the present day have interpreted and been inspired by Pompeii. *The Last Days of Pompeii* is complemented by an extensive program schedule, including lectures and gallery talks, a film program and theatrical presentations in the Ames Family Atrium and exhibition space. Organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art and the J. Paul Getty, ***The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection*** will be on view at the Cleveland Museum of Art from February 24 through July 7, 2013.

Photography Exhibition
American Vesuvius: The Aftermath of Mount St. Helens by Frank Gohlke and Emmet Gowin

Presented in conjunction with ***The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection*** this exhibition reveals the transformation of Mount St. Helens, Washington after the volcanic eruption in 1980 through 47 photographs by the two artists, including nine never-before-seen photographs by Gowin. Because access to the mountain was initially limited to flyovers, both photographers took to the air during their initial visit to investigate the newborn land around the mountain. It was Gowin's first experience with aerial photography, a practice that would soon become central to his landscape work. He made several trips there between 1980 and 1986. Gohlke returned to the region numerous times between 1981 and 1990 and his photographs testify to the volcano's destructive force but also chronicle the land's rebirth during its first decade. *American Vesuvius: The Aftermath of Mount St. Helens by Frank Gohlke and Emmet Gowin* will be on view in the museum's Photography Galleries from January 13 to June 2, 2013.

The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection
Programming Highlights

Programming for individuals, families and students of all ages will complement the exhibition throughout its run. Following is a list of key exhibition programs:

LECTURES

Select lectures are ticketed. Tickets are available through the museum's online box office at clevelandart.org or by phone at 216-421-7350 or 888-CMA-0033.

Slaves, Sluts and Saints: The Imaginary Women of Pompeii, Sunday, February 24, 2:00 p.m., $12/$9 CMA members.

As interest in the victims of Vesuvius grew, elaborate fantasies evolved to fill in the blanks. Dr. Victoria C. Gardner Coates (The Foundation for Defense of Democracies) examines three such characters: the slave Nydia in Bulwer-Lytton's *The Last Days of Pompeii*; Arria Marcella, the temptress in Gautier's novel of the same name; and the beauty Gradiva from Jensen's *Gradiva: A Pompeian Fantasy.*

Luxury, Commerce, and Death in the Villas Buried by Vesuvius at Oplontis, Wednesday, March 6, 5:30 p.m., Free.

Dr. John R. Clarke, Director of the Oplontis Project, presents the results of excavations of two enormous Roman Villas at Torre Annunziata, three miles north of Pompeii. Clarke explores the two sides of ancient Roman life shown by these spectacular finds at Oplontis: leisure (*otium*) and business (*negotium*). Presented by Case Western Reserve University.

Perpetual Disaster: "Pompeii! The ancient city is destroyed again tonight!", Sunday, March 17, 2:00 p.m., $8/$5 CMA members.

Dr. Jon L. Seydl, curator of *The Last Days of Pompeii,* will take on the three big ideas at the heart of this exhibition: decadence, apocalypse and resurrection and why these themes illuminate the ways artists have dealt with the legacy of Pompeii. Dr. Seydl also addresses how the exhibition came to fruition, moving from early concept to international loan show.

Allan McCollum: Life and Work, Saturday, March 23, 2:00 p.m., $15/$10 CMA members.

Journey through forty years of practice with artist Allan McCollum. McCollum will discuss selections from his career, including *The Dog From Pompei,* currently on view in the exhibition *The Last Days of Pompeii.* The *Dog* marks a divergence from his earlier works as a copy made from an object created not by human or mechanical means but by nature.

Stolen from Death: 150 Years of the Pompeian Casts, or the Casts as Works of Art, Saturday, April 6, 2:00 p.m., $8/$5 CMA members.

Dr. Eugene Dwyer (Kenyon College) discusses the creation of the first plaster body casts at Pompeii and considers their reception by contemporaries. Some saw them as tragic victims; others saw them as objects of scientific study; still others saw them as the ultimate works of sculpture. The perception of the casts as works of art or material for art has continued to this day. Following the lecture, Dr. Dwyer will sign copies of his book *Pompeii's Living Statues: Ancient Roman Lives Stolen from Death.*

JOIN IN

Theater Ninjas at the Cleveland Museum of Art

Theater Ninjas present the latest version of their original performance *The Excavation,* a theatrical celebration of the life, death and re-birth of Pompeii in popular culture. This exciting collaboration between the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Cleveland-based Theater Ninjas brings together performance and the visual arts in a one-of-a-kind experience filled with humor, pathos, and catastrophic volcanic eruptions.

Using the Ames Family Atrium as a staging ground for this sprawling choose-your-own-adventure-style performance, the Ninjas explore the comic and tragic legacy of this famous city through a blend of site-specific performance and interactive storytelling.

The Excavation opens during MIX: Apocalypse, the museum's MIX at CMA event series on the first Friday of each month. Friday, March 1, 7:00 p.m. MIX ticket required for March 1 performance.

Free performances: Wednesday, March 20, 7:00 p.m., Friday, April 12, 7:00 p.m., Sunday, April 28, 2:00 p.m.,Wednesday, June 12, 7:00. Free.

Theater Ninjas will also be integrated into the exhibition during special Ninja Days in March, April and May. Visit *The Last Days of Pompeii* on Fridays and Sundays for a unique experience featuring characters from *The Excavation.* With a variety of characters, scenes, and interactive experiences, no two Ninja Days will be alike – come often!

Ninja Days run Friday, March 8 through Sunday, May 19 (excluding March 29 & 31 and April 12 & 28. No regular exhibition tours on Ninja Days.) Fridays, 3:00 – 7:00 p.m., Sundays, noon – 4:00 p.m. Exhibition ticket required.

Second Sunday: Travel through Time to Pompeii, Sunday, March 10, 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Free.

Explore *The Last Days of Pompeii* during hands-on art activities, an Art Stories storytelling session, the museum's Pompeii Art Cart, scavenger hunts and movement activities in the atrium.

IN THE GALLERIES

Art Cart: Pompeii March 10, April 14 and May 12, 1:00– 4:00 p.m., Free.

Touch genuine art objects for a hands-on experience that connects visitors of all ages to objects and themes in the special exhibition *The Last Days of Pompeii.*

Ancient Bodies/Modern Sculptures, Wednesday, February 27, 7:00 p.m. Free with exhibition ticket. Meet in the first exhibition gallery.

Join research assistant Lucy Zimmerman as she explores the body casts of victims from Pompeii and how they have inspired modern and contemporary artists.

Abstract Expressionism and Pompeii Wednesday, March 6, 7:00 p.m. Free with exhibition ticket. Meet in the first exhibition gallery.

After visiting Pompeii in the 1950s, Mark Rothko drew on his experience of the frescoes to help

conceptualize a major painting commission, the decoration of the Four Seasons restaurant in New York's Seagram Building. Dr. Ellen Landau, Case Western Reserve University, discusses Rothko's imaginative restatement of Pompeiian color and organization.

Picturing Pompeii, Wednesday, May 15, 7:00 p.m. Free with exhibition ticket. Meet in the first exhibition gallery.
19th-century artists, inspired by archaeological excavations of Pompeii, often depicted ancient artifacts in their work. Discover these representations with intern Mallory Potash.

EXHIBITION TOURS
Docent-led tours of Pompeii begin Tuesday, March 5. Tuesdays, Thursdays, , and Saturdays at 2:30; Wednesdays at 7:00. Exhibition ticket required; meet in the atrium.

TEACHER PROGRAMS
Recording Disaster: Cartooning Workshop Saturday, March 16 and 23, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Inspired by works of art from the exhibition *The Last Days of Pompeii*, this Connie Towson Ford Teacher Resource Center offering explores personal responses to transformative events through the medium of cartooning. In this two-session workshop, participants will tour the exhibition and also learn the basics of using a graphic narrative with end goal of creating a class comic book anthology. These activities can be replicated at school for a variety of ages.

Though the cartooning workshop can be enjoyed as a stand- alone activity, it can also be combined with the Teacher Resource Center workshop on January 26 (Recording Disaster: Visual Art, Writing and Personal Reflection) which focuses on written communication. The resulting three part series can be taken for graduate credit through Ashland University for an additional fee.

Please register by March 9th by contacting the CMA Ticket Center at 216-421-7350. The workshop is limited to 20 participants. Registration fees include supplies and parking. Cost: $55 for Teacher Resource Center Advantage members, $60 for non-members.

For additional information call Dale Hilton (216 707-2491 or dhilton@clevelandart.org) or Hajnal Eppley (216 707-6811 or heppley@clevelandart.org.)

ART CLASSES
Paper and Plaster Castings Inspired by The Last Days of Pompeii Exhibition Sunday, April 21 1:00–3:30 p.m.
Like the artists in the special exhibition *The Last Days of Pompeii,* we'll be inspired by ancient cultures and their discovery. Using casting techniques just like archaeologists, we'll preserve our artistic creations in plaster and paper. CMA members' registration begins on March 1, non-members begins on March 15.

FILM
Unless noted, all will be shown in the Morley Lecture Hall. Admission to each program is $9; CMA members, seniors 65 & over, and students $7; or one CMA Film Series voucher. Tickets are available

through the museum's online box office at clevelandart.org or by phone at 216-421-7350 or 888-CMA-0033.

***The Last Days of Pompeii,* (with live piano accompaniment), Friday, March 1, 7:00 p.m.**
Directed by Carmine Gallone and Amleto Palermi. The last of the five silent versions of Bulwer-Lytton's love and lava story was the longest, costliest, most lavish and raciest. Sebastian Birch, composer and Assistant Professor of Music at Kent State, provides live piano accompaniment. (1926, 150 min.)

***The Last Days of Pompeii,* Wednesday, April 24, 7:00 p.m.**
Directed by Ernest B. Schoedsack and Merion C. Cooper. With Basil Rathbone. The team behind King Kong reunited two years later for this lavish historical drama that borrowed the name of the Bulwer-Lytton novel but told a different story: that of a blacksmith turned gladiator whose life intersects with that of Christ. (1935, 96 min.)

***Sins of Pompeii (The Last Days of Pompeii),* Wednesday, May 29, 7:00 p.m.**
Directed by Marcel L'Herbier, Paolo Moffa. With Micheline Presle. This forgotten rarity is an opulent version of Bulwer-Lytton's novel that was shot in Italy and France over a two-year period. Dubbed in English. (1950, approx. 95 min.)

***Apocalypse Not,* Wednesday, March 27, 6:45 p.m.**
Some artists see cataclysmic events as a starting point, not an end. See four American experimental works in which death has been given new life: Bill Morrison's *Decasia* (2002); Stan Brakhage's *In Consideration of Pompeii* (1995); Kevin Jerome Everson's *From Pompeii to Xenia* (2003); and Ivan Galietti's *Pompeii New York, Part 1: Pier Caresses* (1985). Galietti will answer audience questions after the screening. Adults only! (1985-2003, total 92 min.)

Voyage to Italy (Viaggio in Italia),* Tuesday, June 11, 7:00 p.m. at the Capitol Theatre, 1390 W. 65th St. *No vouchers.
Directed by Roberto Rossellini. With Ingrid Bergman and George Sanders. In this revered and moving drama, a British man and wife traveling in Italy suffer marital problems that come to a head at Pompeii. In English. (1954, 97 min.)

INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Tickets for ***The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection*** are $15 for Adults, $13 for Students and Seniors, $7 for Children 6-17 (children 5 and under are free.) The exhibition is free for museum members. Complementary exhibition programming includes lectures, tours and theatrical presentations by Theater Ninjas, a Cleveland-based performance art and theater group. Additional programming information may be found at clevelandart.org.

The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection is organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art and the J. Paul Getty Museum. The presenting sponsor for the exhibition is BakerHostetler. The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. The Cleveland Museum of Art is generously funded by Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture. The Ohio Arts Council helped fund this exhibition with state tax

dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans.

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About the Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art is renowned for the quality and breadth of its collection, which includes more than 63,000 artworks and spans 6,000 years of achievement in the arts. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and performing arts and is a leader in digital innovations. One of the top comprehensive art museums in the nation, recognized for its award-winning Open Access program and free of charge to all, the Cleveland Museum of Art is located in the University Circle neighborhood.

The museum is supported in part by residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture and made possible in part by the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), which receives support from the State of Ohio and the National Endowment for the Arts. The OAC is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically. For more information about the museum and its holdings, programs and events, call 888-CMA-0033 or visit cma.org [1].

Press Announcements [2]

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